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Agenda item 79

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Carlos D. **Sorreta** (Philippines)

I. Introduction

1. The item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 53/80 of 4 December 1998.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 17 September 1999, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 23 September 1999, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 64, 65 and 67 to 85, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 11 to 15 and from 18 to 20 October (see A/C.1/54/PV.3-12). Thematic discussions on the items were held, and draft resolutions were introduced and considered, at the 13th to 19th meetings, on 21 and 22 and from 25 to 29 October (see A/C.1/54/PV.13-19). Action on all draft resolutions was taken at the 20th to 27th meetings, on 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9 November (see A/C.1/54/PV.20-27).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General (A/54/459);

(b) Letter dated 5 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the report of the Tokyo Forum for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (A/54/205-S/1999/853);

(c) Letter dated 15 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement

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of Non-Aligned Countries, held in New York on 23 September 1999 (A/54/469-S/1999/1063);

(d) Letter dated 27 October 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Final Declaration of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held at Vienna from 6 to 8 October 1999 (A/54/514-S/1999/1102).

II. Consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.8/Rev.1

5. At the 16th meeting, on 26 October, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the League of Arab States, introduced a draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/C.1/54/L.8).

6. At the 23rd meeting, on 4 November, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the original sponsors, introduced a revised draft resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/C.1/54/L.8/Rev.1), in operative paragraph 1 of which the words "unsafeguarded nuclear materials and nuclear facilities" were replaced by the words "unsafeguarded nuclear facilities".

7. At its 25th meeting, on 8 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.8/Rev.1 by a recorded vote of 125 to 3, with 11 abstentions (see para. 8). The voting was as follows:[1]

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia.

Against:

Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), United States of America.

[1] The delegations of Benin, Guyana and Suriname subsequently indicated that they had intended to vote in favour.

Abstaining:

Barbados, Canada, Iceland, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Marshall Islands, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Trinidad and Tobago.

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

8. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind its relevant resolutions,

Taking note of the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the latest of which is resolution GC(43)RES/23 adopted on 1 October 1999,

Cognizant that the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region of the Middle East would pose a serious threat to international peace and security,

Mindful of the immediate need to place all nuclear facilities in the region of the Middle East under full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency,

Recalling the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference noted with concern the continued existence in the Middle East of unsafeguarded nuclear facilities, reaffirmed the importance of the early realization of universal adherence to the Treaty[3] and called upon all States in the Middle East that had not yet done so, without exception, to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible and to place all their nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards,

Recalling also the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 11 May 1995,[2] in which the Conference urged universal adherence to the Treaty as an urgent priority and called upon all States not yet parties to the Treaty to accede to it at the earliest date, particularly those States that operate unsafeguarded nuclear facilities,

Noting that, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 51/48 of 10 December 1996, Israel remains the only State in the Middle East that has not yet become party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Concerned about the threats posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to the security and stability of the Middle East region,

Stressing the importance of taking confidence-building measures, in particular the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in order to enhance peace and security in the region and to consolidate the global non-proliferation regime,

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[2] See *1995 Review and Extension Conference to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I)), annex.

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

Noting the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty[4] and its signature by 155 States, including a number of States in the region,

1. *Calls upon* the only State in the region that is not party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons[3] to accede to the Treaty without further delay and not to develop, produce, test or otherwise acquire nuclear weapons, and to renounce possession of nuclear weapons, and to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as an important confidence-building measure among all States of the region and as a step towards enhancing peace and security;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

3. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-fifth session the item entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East".

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[4] See resolution 50/245.